

June 19, 1976

M. Walls and A Mitchell  
879 Salem Drive  
Toms River, New Jersey  
08753

Rev. Howard Gaass

District Co-Ordinator

P O box 1145

Baltimore Md. 21203

*we did not send  
one to Jim + Leo  
as you asked -*

Dear Rev. Gaass:

After Speaking to Rev. Lincoln and after much consideration and many prayers for guidance regarding the incident of Bayview Convalescent center and the Study Group of Asbury Park, this letter is being written. On the advice of Rev. Lincoln we attempted to call you on June 12, and 13 leaving our phone number, we did not know that you were out of town at the time and realize with all the coming events of this month that many matters regarding MCC are more pressing at the moment, and that is why we did not call again and chose this means of communication instead.

We received the letter sent to our home on Saturday the 19th of June and dated the 16th in which Jim Beers makes an accusation regarding our violation of his rights and our oppression of our Gay People. These charges are false and we did not influence the decision regarding his coming to Bayview. <sup>on that day</sup> The following is a true account of the events of that telegram which in fact did get sent from our home.

On ~~the~~ Friday the 11, of June at approximately 4pm the Activities Dir. of Bayview came into the office of the Director of Nurses ( Audrey) who was also the Acting Administrator of the Nursing Home in the absence of the Administrator and said that Rev. Beers had called her on Monday June 7th and stated he would be down to do the services at Bayview, she knowing that Miss Wallb ( Marti) was to pick him up at the Bus Station and assist him in the services wanted Audrey to give her a phone number





or address where Rev. Beers could be reached, so that a telegram could be sent to him informing him that another minister who she had engaged would be giving the services from now on. Audrey stated she did not have the address or phone number and that she could reach him through our minister Rev. Lincoln after returning home. Mrs Curry expressed her concern regarding her involvement with a homosexual minister and her concern and worry due to the staff pointing out that she had engaged him, she usually investigates the Churches that the ministers came from and did not since Marti and Audrey had given her phone number and name to Rev. Beers. She wanted the matter given prompt attention and since the Administrator could not be reached since he had left being an Orthodox Jew, she Mrs. Mitchell ( Audrey) would have to take care of it. Audrey assured her that there would be no problem and felt that upon coming home we ( Audrey and Marti) could reach Jim at the NY phone or the Asbury phone number, we tried and were unsuccessful. We felt that we would save him the embarrassment of coming to Bayview and finding another minister there. Also that is quite a trip and there is no way to get to Bayview except by Cab or Car. When we were unsuccessful the telegram was sent from our home. We felt that Jim and Leo would call us and find out the reason. We received no call and on Saturday June 12 the Tel. Co called us and informed us that the telegram had not been delivered and Audrey then called the Asbury tel. number and spoke to Jim. Before she could explain anything except that the telegram was sent Jim called her a liar and Audrey told him she would have Mrs. Curry call him at that telephone number in Asbury. This was done in a matter of several minutes. proving that Mrs. Curry herself sent the order for his not coming to Bayview. This phone call was one of utter despair for us since Jim and Leo are supposed to be understanding and Christian in there dealings with members of the MCC. It was a shouting and free for all with Jim and Leo on extensions. Leo stated and excuse me for the language





(3)

" you know, sweetheart, we really don't give a fuck about your positions and your family" this followed Audrey's expression of fear regarding the publicity and Marti and Audrey's involvement with Jim and Leo and the services at Bayview. As for our telling them that Audrey had brought the article to A. Curry's attention I can only assume that since they were so angry that they misunderstood. For in fact Mrs. Curry mentioned it to A. Mitchell with concern with the publicity that could result from the articles and the relatives of the patients reaction to it, also reminding me that I had the responsibility to deal with any problem as my employer would wish and to consider the welfare of the institution. We ( Bayview) have had much unfavorable publicity already, one of our patients had jumped from the 7th floor and other incidents which I am not free to divulge, and I knew that if I did not send ~~of~~ the telegram <sup>or get in touch with Jim and allowed him to come after Mrs. Curry had informed me of the problem I would be considered lax by the Administrator.</sup> Mrs Curry gave me a copy of the telegram to be sent and I stated I would see that the matter was attended too. Following is a copy of the telegram.

"Due to unforeseen circumstances your services are not required, Your time has been filled. Mrs. A Curry Activities Director Bayview Conv. Ctr."

In answer to the third paragraph of the letter sent to me by Jim, Jim called my Relief Supervisor who works only when the full time one is off and stated that he wanted to speak to someone who could let him come to Bayview and answer for the telegram which he stated he received. Stating that his services were sold. He demanded to know if we sold our ministers and wanted an explanation. He asked to speak to Mrs. Curry who was off and then to the Administrator or anyone else in Charge. When he was informed that the office was not open on Weekends he stated he would call tomorrow, which was Monday. That call was made to Mrs. Curry who informed him that he would not be needed and that she had engaged another man who had been waiting to come to Bayview for some time. He stated that he felt this was not the real reason and would call again.





This call was made on Wednesday following, Mrs. Curry's daughter answered the phone and stated that Mrs. Curry was unavailable at the moment and Jim then asked that she call him in Asbury Park on Friday. Mrs. Curry then came to Mrs. Mitchell (Audrey) and stated that Rev. Beers was annoying her with phone calls and was there anyway she could prevent this harassment. Mrs. Mitchell stated she Curry should speak to him and tell him that she already had someone if that were the case.

The relief supervisor that Jim spoke to had no knowledge of the names of the clergy who were to give services only that Mrs. Curry provide such services to the patients and if in fact she did state that the patients were looking forward to the services she did so with no knowledge of who was to come in. Our patients are mostly confused and disorientated and most of the time do not know what they ate for lunch much less the name or face of a man who gave three services in Bayview in a period of five months. Jim's schedule was for the second Sunday of each month.

May 9th service at Bayview was cancelled by Jim after a conversation with Martie on May 2, 1976 in which it was stated that we were concerned about our positions due to the expected and desired publicity needed for Asbury Park in the local papers. Jim stated that he knew of our request that he resign and recalled our many conversations regarding this. Martie stated that if he did not resign we would have to leave ASPMCC and he said he didn't feel he could do so unless we sent a petition to NYMCC board of directors since they would only license him for the Chaplaincy and he needed Bayview until they had that meeting and promised he would resign before he was scheduled to go to Bayview again. These meetings were to take place on May 21st at which time he would graduate from school and he needed Bayview as a place where he was actively preaching in the capacity of a chaplain.

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Jim sent us a copy of the petition as he wanted it written to be typed on our own typewriter so noone would know that he had written it and we did so, the petition was sent to you and "YMCC board of directors and a copy was to go to his school and the board of licensure at Providence RI. He also asked Audrey and I to preach in Asbury Park on May 9th which we refused to do telling him that we did not feel qualified to do so.

There are many reasons for our dedication to Asbury Park MCC falling off and these reasons would be far better discussed with you in person. Some of these reasons have been discussed by phone with Rev. Lincoln who felt we should inform you of these facts. If possible we would like to set up a meeting for a Saturday or Sunday since we are both off on the weekends and would like Rev. Lincoln present at that time. One of these is our concern for the Asbury Park MCC which we worked so hard to form and the fact that on May 21, 1976 Leo Steockl called our home and spoke to Marti stating that Jim now had more credits than Troy Perry and if NYMCC did not give him ASPMCC he would break away and start a new church under Jim's leadership. Also the petition sent asking for Jim to become Pastor of ASPMCC was not signed by steady members of the study group in fact our five year old who could not write is one of the signatures as is the clerk and some of the guests of the Asbury Hudson Hotel. There have never been the same people at the services each week and only a few of us are involved.. JIM LEO and us and our son, there is much more to the story and of course we have discussed it with Rev. Lincoln.

Jim states that his appearance at Bayview would in no way cause us to lose our positions at Bayview are truly unwarranted. We gave his name to Mrs Curry and Marti not only picked them up and drove them back and forth to Bayview but used here stereo equipment from home for the loudspeaker, zeroxed ther services and assisted with the services at Bayview. and more than that served communion to the patients at Bayview with Jim and Leo. By serving communion I mean as an exhorter would do with administering the host and wine not once but at two of the services.





(6)

Serving communion on two occasions certainly would lead people to believe that Martie was associated with Jim in more than a casual way. Leo also served communion at the same time, administering the host and wine. We did not know that this was against the rules until we received a copy of the NYMCC By-Laws sent to us by Jim so that we could find a way to have him chosen for the Pulpit. Communion was also administered to Jim and Leo by Audrey at ASPMCC. The pulpit that appeared in the newspaper was donated to Martie from Bayview for use in her church. It has a very distinctive markings and is easily recognized as the old one of Bayview. Surely Jim is not thinking clearly and I question his motives and have told him so. I stated he was only interested in Bayview as a Glory to himself and Leo and he should examine his own christian motives. They remind me of the scribes and pharisees of which Jesus spoke.

We find Jim's concern for our problems both physical and welfare ironic since he is the cause of our jeopardy in our employment. Gil Lincoln knew as did Jim and Leo about our feeling concerning our positions and both agreed that MCC would never be mentioned at Bayview. This was reinforced many times by us before the first service s at ASPMCC ever came about. and Jim agreed with no hesitations. We asked that before the articles concerning MCC become public that he resign from Bayview and again he agreed. Now we have a different view from Jim. The article in the Press stated Atlantic City when in fact Bayview is in Bayville N.J. There can be no doubt since Jim's picture and the pulpit appeared in the Press. *Present*  
*if he did not Agree - why not mention Bayville*

We feel that MCC should be a haven to us, not a hell. I question anyone's right to force me to do something I do not wish to do and further an unable to do at the present. Jim is only at Bayview on Rev. Lincolns recommendation and *Sins* promise that Jim would use Duane Methodist or Rev. Lincolns Presbyterian church name at Bayview. It was done as a favor to Rev. Lincoln since Jim needed the practice. I had no idea that the events of the past week and our involvement with Jim Beers and Leo would





lead us to the night mare experience which has culminated in the past weeks. Surely this is not MCC as we learned of it through NYMCC.

Jim states he could not convey his feeling of regard to us on the phone, the only time Jim or Leo called us was to scold us for not attending Church. Even though we had some illness and car trouble the concern was not for our well being but only attendance at the church. Surely this is not MCC

Jim also states that he is risking his job. There are many safe miles between NYC and Asbury Park N.J. I would venture to guess that few people in NY read the Asbury Park Press. Where is His Risk???? The Asbury Park Press is the New York Times of Ocean County and most of the Jersey Shore. I feel it would be far different if it were the New York Times that his picture appeared in.

Leo has financial security and should Jim lose his job as a teacher Leo could provide for him. Where again is the risk??? We on the other hand have a five year old son, which we fear we will lose if our sexuality were brought out, also both of us are employed at the Bayview Conv. Center if we lose our jobs both are unemployed -- There is a risk

In the future, we hope to be open but for the present, we as nurses care for the sick and in our field<sup>the</sup>/confused patient, certainly this is a target area too.

In this letter sent to us from Jim, I feel I must confess that this is the first sign of warmth or friendly attitude towards our family that he has shown except when we could be of assistance to him and Leo. Audrey's recent illness and my accident and our son's impending surgery did not even warrant a phone call, asking how we felt, only when would we come to church they needed us to bring someone from Lakewood to church.





Our dedication to MCC does and will continue to exist, and we will attend MCCNY again after we calm down from this experience. However there are circumstances which caused us to separate from the ASPMCC and we tell you this after much pray and many conversations with Rev. Lincoln.

We pray to Jesus that you will will listen with an open mind and heart and request that Jim doesn't find out what we say when we have our meeting with you, we have much to fear from Jim and Leo. We fear his reaction, we have been sworn at, screamed at and cursed at and threatened by him in regards to our jobs and since he and Leo do know our fears will use them against us. We fear much from them for being Nurses we can tell a potentially dangerous personality. May God protect us, and Asbury Park MCC. We have worked too hard for ASPMCC for us to watch it fall prey to a power push. From the first the Lord has been the guide in Asbury Park and surely he had made the events of the past week a plan for us to speak and aid him in ASPMCC

We have tried to convey some of our feeling regarding Bayview and the truth of the succession of events of May 12 and 13 and those following. We can do no more than that and the letter sent to us from Jim was not directed to us but to You and Rev. Lincoln although sent to us. They must justify there behavior. and prevent us from being heard.

Sincerely in Christ

M. Walls and M. Mitchell

*M. Walls* *Michael Mitchell*

PS Gil told us to tell you of the list of names sent to us from Jim of people who attended NYMCC from new jersey, that he wished us to send letters too to come to Asbury Park. I believe these were confidential and destroyed the list of names. Although I remember a few.





Walls + Mitchell  
879 Salem Dr.  
Toms River N.J.  
08753



*Special Delivery*

*Special  
Delivery*

Rev. Sel Lincoln  
Metropolitan Comm. Church  
74th Ave and 134th St -

PERSONAL

Box 1757 YPO

N.Y. N.Y.  
10001











# Gay Pastor Feels Led by Spirit

ASBURY PARK — Jim Beers describes himself as a basically shy person who has always been somewhat afraid to stand up in front of a group of people.

But because of his desire to help others, share his tal-

## Profile

ents, and obey God's will, he entered the ministry.

"I always felt I had a calling," he said. "But then I dropped out of religion completely, until gay churches began to spring up."

Raised a Roman Catholic on Staten Island, Beers now adheres to the Protestant tradition. Like the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Churches, Beers believes the Bible is the infallible and inspired word of God.

Eleven years ago, Beers realized he was a homosexual. The same year he graduated from Pace University and worked for a time with the New York state Department of Social Services. He now teaches handicapped children in the New York public school system.

In 1967 he met Leo Stoeckl, an interior decorator. On Aug. 9, 1971, they were married by the Rev. Robert W. Wood, a homosexual and pastor of United Church of Christ, Newark.

Beers and Stoeckl now live in New York and commute to the shore on weekends for the MCC services at the Asbury-Hudson Hotel.

Spiritually, Beers' life reached a turning point five years ago when he and Leo went on a cruise throughout Greece, Yugoslavia, and Turkey.

They visited Ephesus, where Paul preached; Patmos, where John wrote Revelation; and Crete, where Timothy is buried.

That prompted him to begin reading the Bible. He returned with a new sense of purpose and awareness of Christ.

"I'm sure the Holy Spirit led us there for that purpose," he said.

He and Leo began attending the Church of the Beloved Disciple, an orthodox church which he says was the first gay church in New York.

Then Troy Perry, founder of MCC, came to New York to establish what Beers calls a "prophetic" church as opposed to a "priestly" church, such as Beloved Disciple. It was then that Beers left Roman Catholicism.

He became a charter member of MCC in New York and took an active role in its ministry.

He entered New York Theological Seminary three years ago, openly admitting his homosexuality. He describes the school as a "very liberal place."

All along, he considered himself to be a Christian.

That was until last year, when he responded to the

altar call given in an English-speaking church in Spain. There, he says, he accepted Jesus into his life and was born again.

"When I came back from Spain, I was a different person. Everyone noticed it and mentioned it," he said.

While he feels he has been called to help his gay broth-

ers and sisters, Beers does not confine his ministry to homosexuals. Weekly he travels to Atlantic City to minister to elderly patients in a nursing home.

"I now believe the Holy Spirit governs my life and inspires me," he said. "Everything I have is from the Holy Spirit."

## Pastor Interprets The Biblical View

Jim Beers, worship coordinator for the Metropolitan Community Church, says he is accustomed to having Christians confront him with biblical verses about homosexuality.

He agrees that homosexuality is clearly condemned in the Old Testament, particularly in Lev. 18:22 — "You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination."

But, he says, "Israel was a very small nation and needed all the men it could get to defend itself. Homosexuality would not help their cause."

Beers believes the prophets were not so much concerned about homosexuality as they were the sins of selfishness, arrogance, and pride. These, according to Beers, were the real sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, the most wicked of the biblical cities.

In the New Testament, he says, those things which were previously considered

unclean were declared clean. He quotes Romans 14:14 — "Nothing is unclean in itself, but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

The first chapter of Romans also deals explicitly with homosexuality. Beers says Paul was speaking about those people who had turned away from God, and believes he was directing his comments to the "swingers" of his day.

"Paul was not talking about people like Leo and myself, who have been together nearly 10 years. He's specifically talking about people having sex for sex sake and hurting other people."

Finally, he says, Christ commanded the disciples to preach the gospel to everyone, and that includes homosexuals.

"I am not saved by the words of Moses or of Paul," he says. "I am saved by the blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."





# Church for Gay People Begins Local Ministry

By MARCIA E. LEAHY  
Press Staff Writer

ASBURY PARK — A young man hesitated as he entered the room. He glanced about nervously as if hoping to find a familiar face.

Jim Beers stopped in mid-sentence and extended his hand to the newcomer.

"Welcome to Metropolitan Community Church," he said, smiling warmly. "It's good to have you with us."

The tension on the young man's face relaxed. He had found a place where he sensed he would be loved and respected.

Like most of the others in the room, the young man is a homosexual. The Metropolitan Community Church was established as a ministry to the gay community.

"We are not a gay church," emphasized Beers, the church's worship coordinator. "We are a church for gay people."

Everyone, regardless of sexual preference, is welcomed, he explained.

Services are held each Sunday evening in a street level room in the front of the Asbury-Hudson Hotel at 331 Cookman Ave. The church is affiliated with the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, an international denomination which grew out of a small gay church founded by the Rev. Troy Perry in Los Angeles in 1968.

MCC has made four unsuccessful attempts at establishing a church in New Jersey, but Beers is confident the local church will thrive.

"I think we hit the right place. Asbury Park is quite a gay resort," he said, pointing to the proximity of a number of gay bars.

Both Beers and Leo Stoeckl, church treasurer, have been involved in the ministry of MCC in New York, one of the denomination's most successful churches, since its inception four years ago. They believe their experience will be invaluable in preventing the mistakes made by those churches which failed.

Beers, a 33-year-old teacher, graduated May 23 from New York Theological Seminary. His ordination, however, is not expected for more than a year.

"This is a very difficult ministry, and we are more careful than most denominations. We have suffered many growing pains and

we must be very cautious about who we ordain," he said.

The Fellowship's by-laws support his comment. The requirements for ordination, as well as for the establishment of a church, include several trial periods.

The church recognizes two orders in the lay ministry, deacons and exhorters. Beers has been an exhorter in New York for three years. Exhorters perform basically the same function as deacons, but they may serve as worship coordinators in the absence of a pastor. They are not, however, considered assistant or interim pastors.

In the professional ministry, the church also recognizes two orders, licensed ministers and ordained ministers. Beers will become a licensed minister in early August, but he must serve in that capacity for at least a year before he can be considered for ordination.

Both men and women may be ordained. Ministers previously ordained by other denominations also must complete one year as a licensed minister before their MCC ordination.

The establishment of a church is accomplished only through a series of three steps.

A group wishing to become affiliated with the Universal Fellowship must first become a study group for at least three months. Once it meets certain attendance and financial requirements, it becomes a mission, also for a three-month period. Higher standards must be met before the group can be considered a church.

The local church, which opened in April, is a study group. It was officially accepted into the Fellowship three weeks ago.

Attendance averages at about 20 persons each week. Beers described the local church as unusual because nearly two-thirds of the regular worshippers are women. Other MCC groups, he said, tend to attract a majority of men.

Beers said he, Stoeckl, and Judy Hayes, the church secretary, attempted to reach the gay community through the distribution of fliers, newspaper advertisements, and communication with gay organizations throughout the state.

So far, the church has attracted a limited number of straights as well as gays, which Beers said is common in many MCC congregations.

Jim Beers reads the Scripture during a worship service at the Metropolitan Community Church, Asbury Park, which serves the gay community.

ASBURY PARK PRESS

A-20

Religion

Fri., June 4, 1976











JAMES A. BEERS  
333 EAST 14TH STREET  
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003

June 17, 1976

Dear Neil:

The enclosed letter is a copy  
of one sent to Audrey Mitchell. Due  
to the delicate nature of this correspondence,  
I trust that it will not circulate.

Sincerely,  
Jim





June 16, 1976

Ms. Audrey Mitchell  
879 Salem Drive  
Toms River, New Jersey

Dear Audrey:

I am writing this letter not to admonish you, but to make my position clear to you.

Needless to say, I've been shocked and dismayed at your recent actions: (1) sending me a telegram on your telephone number with the pretense that it came from Bayview Convalescent Center informing me that I am no longer wanted at that institution; (2) admitting to me that you brought to Mrs. Audrey Curry's attention the article about me which appeared in the Asbury Park Press.

I understand that the personnel and the residents of Bayville were looking forward to my visit as late as 9:00AM Sunday morning. Two weeks ago, I was asked personally on the telephone to preach there Sunday.

I don't see any reason why my appearance at this institution could affect your or Marti's employment. You haven't attended MCC Asbury Park since April 4th, and Marti attended once since that date. Furthermore, my duties at this institution have nothing to do with my sexual orientation. I am respected there as a Christian minister which I am.

As of this writing, I don't know the final decision of the institution, but in the unlikely situation of you and Marti losing your jobs because you know me, I would do anything in my power to challenge such a decision. However, I sincerely believe that such a decision would never happen.



As far as I am concerned, as a Christian minister who happens to be a homosexual, my rights have been violated in such a way as never happened to me before. I was refused the right to ~~teach~~ and counsel a few hours before I should have been at the institution. And what is worse, this oppression of a gay person was inflicted by another gay person.

I have been well aware of your fear concerning exposure for the last few months. I have prayed that you and Marti would be given the strength to return to the church. I admit that I have been unable to convey my feelings to you on the telephone.

One of my main concerns is that you and Marti are relieved of this fear. I sincerely hope that you look towards Jesus whose very life was announced by angels saying, "Do not fear" as was his resurrection when the angels said, "Do not be afraid". During his ministry, he constantly told people that he cured, "do not fear, only believe."

I firmly believe that Jesus will take care of me in my openness. I have everything to lose in starting this ministry: my employment(which is a top target of gay opponents), and my spouse and myself have pulled up our roots and are moving here permanently. If I lose my job, I will accept it as the will of God, and I will fight it because I am no less a person, a teacher or a minister because I'm gay. NO One gay or straight is going to tell me that or make me feel that way, and get away with it.

Even though, I deplore your conduct of last Sunday, I am praying that both of you will receive the grace to rid yourselves of the shackles of fear, and again serve the Lord in a ministry that needs people as dedicated as you were in February and March. I always will be grateful for the





assistance that both of you gave me in establishing the study group in Asbury Park. Many people ask about the two of you, and tell me that you remain in their prayers.

I sincerely forgive you for your conduct this past weekend because I am well aware of the oppression that is placed on the heads of gay people.

Give my regards to Christopher, and I hope that we all see each other soon.

Sincerely In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim".

Jim Beers

cc: Rev. Howard Gaass  
Rev. Gilbert Lincoln









26 March 1976

The Ministerial Affairs and Credentials Committees  
NED/MCC  
UFMCC

Attached is the application for licensure in UFMCC submitted by JAMES A BEERS, duly endorsed by the Church Clerk and by me. At the meeting in question, seven Members were present, one was on leave-of-absence granted by the Board, and one was absent.

Jim has done good work in the setting of old-age homes and hospitals, and has shown real growth and improvement in his other work for MCC/NY. I am duly impressed by his initiative and achievement in completing the course of studies at New York Theological Seminary.

I pointed out to him that I thought his application would be judged not only upon academic achievements, but also upon what he could show in terms of concrete ministry. He went right to work to try to develop the prospects for MCC at Asbury Park, NJ. He is committed up to the hilt. My only concern is whether he has perhaps moved too fast?

The Board just did not seem to feel that Jim is at present fully qualified for a full range of pastoral responsibilities, and so stipulated their approval of licensure with limitation. My own personal judgment is that his abilities and personal qualifications for pastoral work will not fully appear until he tries the work. I pointed out to the Board that I have to wonder if I would vote for me now as I was actually when I was at the point Jim now is: I think, I know, there is a great deal of growing and tempering entailed in pastoring. My own hope would be that he might grow in pastoral work from the secure base of skills and experience in ministry in nursing homes. If he's not ready to begin now, he never will be. I'd like to see him begin. And I venture to hope he will have adequate guidance-support-supervision as he does so.

Gilbert H. Lincoln



25 March 1978

The Ministerial Affairs and Credentials Committee  
MEMO  
1978

Attached is the application for licensure in UPMO sub-  
mitted by JAMES A. BERRY, duly endorsed by the Council Clerk  
and by me. At the meeting in question, seven members were  
present, and one on leave-of-absence granted by the Board,  
and one was absent.

Jim has done good work in the setting of old-age homes and  
hospitals, and has shown great growth and improvement in his  
other work for MOPBY. I am duly impressed by his initiative  
and eagerness in completing the course of studies at New  
York Theological Seminary.

I pointed out to him that I thought his application would  
be judged not only upon academic achievements, but also upon  
what he could show in terms of concrete ministry. He went  
right to work to try to develop and propose for MOPBY  
Assembly Park, N.Y. He is excited as to the idea. My only  
concern is whether he has perhaps moved too fast?

The Board just did not seem to feel that Jim is at present  
fully qualified for a full range of pastoral responsibilities,  
and so stipulated their approval of licensure with limitation.  
My own personal judgment is that his education and personal  
qualifications for pastoral work will not fully appear until  
he tries the work. I pointed out to the Board that I have to  
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great deal of growing and learning entailed in pastoring.  
My own hope would be that he might grow in pastoral work  
from the narrow base of skills and experience in ministry  
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will be. I'd like to see him begin. And I venture to hope  
he will have adequate guidance-supervision as he  
does so.

Clifford H. Lincoln



## Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

## APPLICATION FOR LICENSE AS A MINISTER

DATE: April 29, 1975NAME: James A. Beers TELEPHONE: 212-475-0541ADDRESS: 333 East 14<sup>th</sup> St.  
New York, New York ZIP: 10003

1. Indicate the local MCC congregation (Chartered Church) in which you hold official membership:

MCC- New York For how long? 3 years

2. Indicate the positions or offices held and committees or activities in which you have participated in MCC:

Exporter Dates: 1/15/73 - Present  
Chaired and participated in numerous meetings during the past 3 years including Men's Rap + Publication Dates: 4/72 - Present  
Conducted Communicants classes Dates: 1/73 - 6/74  
Manned Church telephone Dates: 4/73 - 11/74

3. List below all schools attended

| EDUCATION                              | Name and Location of School                                     | No. of Years Attended | Course of Study<br>General Special                      | Did you Graduate? | Date of Leaving<br>Mo. Yr. |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Grammar School                         | Our Lady Help of Christians Staten Island, New York 10312       | 1944-52               |                                                         | Yes               | 6 '52                      |
| High School                            | St. Peter's High School Staten Island, New York                 | 1952-56               | Academic                                                | Yes               | 6 '56                      |
| COLLEGE<br>Night School                | PACE COLLEGE, 41 Park Row NY, NY (now Pace University)          | 1960-65               | B.A. English                                            | Yes               | 6 '65                      |
| GRADUATE SCHOOL<br>Correspondence Sch. | NEW YORK UNIVERSITY                                             | 1971-74               | SPECIAL EDUCATION                                       | NO                | 6 '74                      |
|                                        | HUNTER COLLEGE                                                  | 1968-69               | EDUCATION                                               | NO                | 2 '69                      |
| SEMINARY<br>College or University      | NEW YORK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY 235 E 49 <sup>th</sup> St, NY, NY | 1973-                 | PREPARATION FOR DEGREE: Masters of Professional Studies |                   |                            |

4. Provide below your Employment Record for the past 5 years  
(List last employer first)

| Employers Name and Address                                                                                                               | Kind of Work             | Weekly Wage | Started | Left    | Reason                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------------------------------|
| ① New York City Board of Education<br>Bureau for the Education of the Physically Handicapped<br>110 Livingston St.<br>Brooklyn, New York | Teacher of the Homebound | \$280       | 9-72    | Present |                                 |
| ② New York City Board of Education - P.S. 186 M<br>42 West 145 <sup>th</sup> St, NY, NY                                                  | Classroom Teacher        | \$220       | 1-68    | 6-72    | Appointment to Present Position |

29Y  
29Y  
29Y  
80



5. What was your religious or church affiliation prior to your membership in MCC? Roman Catholic

For how many years? 34

If you have discontinued that association, when did you do so? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? I have discontinued that association, but not formally

6. In your previous church affiliation, were you engaged in any type of Christian ministry, service or activity? Yes If so, what? \_\_\_\_\_

Alexian Brother, Alexian Brothers Novitiate,  
Gresham, Wisconsin - 1957-1959

7. Do you now hold any position or credentials with any other religious denomination or body? No If so, Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of body: \_\_\_\_\_

8. If Item 7, above, is "Yes", would you be willing to disassociate yourself from that denomination or body upon being licensed as a minister in UFMCC? \_\_\_\_\_ If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Cite the circumstances or situations confirming and supporting your decision to dedicate your life to the professional Christian ministry in UFMCC. I earnestly believe that I have a calling as a minister in U.F.M.C.C. where God does not discriminate, and the true message of Jesus Christ is carried out - Jesus loves us and wants each and everyone of us to fulfill out life's goals and aims.

10. Do you believe your commitment to include a full-time ministry? No  
If not, then to what extent? teaching, consoling, counseling + preaching

11. What talents do you feel you can offer to further the goals of the UFMCC ministry? At the present time, my teaching position provides me with an income that allows me to support the church and be faithful to my responsibilities.

12. Have you studied the By-Laws of UFMCC? Yes

13. Are you in agreement with the statement of faith adopted by the General Conference of UFMCC as stated in the Fellowship By-Laws? YES

14. Would you teach/preach any additional scriptural truth as a doctrine of UFMCC and/or require its acceptance before receiving an individual into membership of the Church or to administer the Sacraments and Rites of the Church to an individual? No  
(If "Yes", explain briefly on the back of this sheet or on another sheet of paper attached to this application.)

15. Explain briefly your understanding of the Sacraments and their observance in the local Church. BAPTISM - acceptance of Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and confirming the fact that you are a child of God in the Christian family. HOLY COMMUNION - all true believers can partake in the body and blood of Christ for the sake of Grace and human transformation.

16. Do you endeavor at each appropriate opportunity to testify of the Christ and to regularly devote time to Bible study, prayer & meditation? YES

I have discontinued that association but not formally

Alexis Brother, Alexis Brothers Novitiate  
 1957-1959  
 Gresham, Wisconsin

No

I earnestly believe that I have a calling as a minister in U.M.C. where God does not discriminate and the true message of Jesus is carried out - Jesus loves us and wants each and every one of us to fulfill out life's goals and aims.

teaching, counseling, counseling & preaching

At the present time, my teaching position provides me with an income that allows me to support the church and be free to my responsibilities

Yes

No

BAPTISM - acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and confirming the fact that you are a child of God  
 HOLY COMMUNION - all true believers can partake in the body and blood of Christ for the sake of giving and human transformation

Yes



17. Do you recognize and accept the responsibility to set an example before others in all aspects of Christian living? YES
18. Do you support efforts in the area of social justice (especially with reference to obtaining human rights for gay people) that are pursued within the framework of our Fellowship By-Laws and the traditions of non-violence? YES
19. Do you tithe to your local MCC congregation? YES
20. Are you prepared to move to another geographical location, if needed, in order to serve in the ministry of UFMCC? NO
- If not, why? I would move only with the mutual consent of my spouse with whom I have made a covenant with Jesus Christ 8-9-71
21. Will you endeavor to support the international programs and decisions of the UFMCC as adopted and authorized by the General Conferences and implemented by its elected representatives? YES

I affirm that the above statements are true. I have read and understand the "Requirements for Professional Ministers" (UFMCC Form 75001).

Signed: James A. Beers

TRANSCRIPTS OF COLLEGE CREDITS MUST BE PROVIDED. ATTACH ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT WILL SUPPORT YOUR QUALIFICATIONS AS A UFMCC MINISTER (SUCH AS REPRODUCTIONS OF DEGREES, CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, ETC). SUBMIT THIS APPLICATION TO THE PASTOR OF YOUR LOCAL CHARTERED MCC.

DO NOT RETURN TO APPLICANT\*\*CONFIDENTIAL\*\*MAKE NO PROMISES TO APPLICANT

LOCAL CHURCH ACTION:

PASTOR RECOMMENDATION: ( ) YES ( ) NO Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: With a full board of \_\_\_\_\_ persons, a total of \_\_\_\_\_ have voted to recommend this request for license.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_, Church Clerk

FORWARD APPLICATION & ATTACHMENTS TO LOCAL DISTRICT COORDINATOR

DISTRICT ACTION: (Note: All material must be in the UFMCC office no later than June 15th)

DISTRICT COORDINATOR RECOMMENDATION: ( ) YES ( ) NO

DISTRICT CREDENTIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE (Consisting of District Coordinator as chairperson, all senior pastors of Chartered Churches, and all Ordained Ministers residing in the district): With a full committee of \_\_\_\_\_ UFMCC ministers, a total of \_\_\_\_\_ have voted to recommend the granting of a UFMCC license as requested.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_, District Coordinator

NOTIFY CANDIDATE THAT HE/SHE (HAS)(HAS NOT) BEEN RECOMMENDED TO BE LICENSED BY UFMCC. IF NOT RECOMMENDED, GIVE SPECIFIC REASONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER PREPARATION. FORWARD APPLICATION AND ATTACHMENTS TO THE MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS AND AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICES OF UFMCC. IF THE ANSWER TO ITEM 7 IS "YES", SEND APPLICATION TO BOARD OF ELDERS.

UFMCC ACTION: ( ) LICENSE GRANTED ( ) LICENSE NOT GRANTED

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN APPLICATION AND ATTACHMENTS TO UFMCC FILES IN EXECUTIVE OFFICES.



YES

YES

YES

NO

28 I would make only with the person I have made a covenant with  
YES

James A. Brown







5-6-75

Dear Roy:

Enclosed are copies of the sermons delivered by me while you were away.

You were silent this weekend concerning my licensing, and you never asked me any questions. However, I have decided to withdraw my application due to your opposition.

I don't want us to part this July as enemies. Let us try to mend fences by that time.

Sincerely,  
Jim









August 3, 1975

Dear Hil:

Leo and I are having a great vacation in Spain. Right now we are spending two weeks in the Canary Islands. We are discovering the island of Tenerife which has two large cities, volcanoes and beautiful flora. From the seventh to the tenth of August, we will leave this beautiful apartment at the Tan Bel Hotel Park, and go to the resort on the other side of the island, Puerto De La Cruz. We visited this Atlantic City of the Canaries yesterday, and realized it is gayer than Tan Bel in many ways. We will spend the ninth of August there which is the fourth anniversary of our Holy Union.

Sister Constance sent me a letter, and it arrived two days ago. She gave me all the details of the Congregational meeting, and told me that you were selected our Worship Coordinator for the next three months, but that you must decide when you return from Europe. Congratulations! I hope that the Holy Spirit moves you in such a way that you accept this position, and eventually will become our pastor. I know that you are a real professional, and are able to handle a congregation, but you are lacking experience with the Fellowship and handling an almost entirely gay congregation. However, you are the one to direct us now, and the Lord will provide that which you need. I have been with the Church for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years, and an exhortor for almost three years. I know a lot about the Fellowship and also the concerns and needs of our congregation. When I return to New York on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August, I will be always there for assistance, concern and encouragement. We can do great things in New York if we do it as one in Christ.

I sincerely pray that you will accept the offer of the Pulpit Committee. If for some reason you refuse, I will also understand because I will know that Christ has directed you to make that decision. However, if you do refuse and Jay, likewise, refuses, then there will be no other alternative for me but to present myself as Worship Coordinator before the Board of Directors.

I would like to tell you of an incident that occurred last Sunday evening in Torremolinos, Malaga, Spain. We attended an evening service at the Evangelical Community Church of Torremolinos. We had previously attended a service there on the Wednesday before, and we were very impressed. There were many young people from all over the English speaking world singing what they call "Jesus Music". The service on Sunday was very similar. Many of the young people spoke







of God's Love, and they sang such hymns as "Everybody Oughta Know". We heard an altar call which was really moving. I really felt the spirit and knew that God loved me. Then, the pastor got up to say a few words. His name was the Rev. Del Vecchio. He was about forty years old and obviously American. The reverend spoke of God's Love and how He has saved people from sin and degradation. He spoke of Noah's Ark and Paul's epistle to the Romans, Chapter One. We have never heard of such fire and brimstone. We were both condemned for our lifestyle along with all our brothers and sisters. I couldn't do anything at that moment, ~~but~~ pray for this pastor. It is a pity when an ordained minister ~~finds~~ thinks that Romans 1:26 is more important than John 3:16 or 1 Cor 13.

I spoke to the young man that gave the altar call. I explained that I was a seminarian, and that I was openly gay. <sup>person</sup> I told him that the pastor as far as I was concerned did not preach a God of Love. I told him about MCC (I suspect that he is one of us & in the closet). He told me that they preach the truth in this church. They must preach the truth that homosexuality has been condemned by God. I told him that I preach the truth also\* that Jesus died for all of us, and I'm saved as much as anybody in that congregation.

I left that church shaken, but then I realized that that sermon was one of the most meaningful sermons that I ever heard. It lit a flame in my heart. God told me that evening that no matter what is wrong with MCC and the Universal Fellowship - at this moment in my life it is the way for me. "Yes." "Everybody Oughta Know Who Jesus Is." Jesus is loving and kind and we won't be condemned because of our sexual orientation.

I hope to preach a sermon on this experience in the near future and send a copy to the Rev. Del Vecchio. Taking your advice not to discuss contents of future sermons, I ask you not to repeat this story. However, I am telling you this story to let you know that MCC is needed at this moment in history.

Before I close this letter, I would like to remind you of the blessing that you gave me when you gave me communion on May 25<sup>th</sup>. "May God bless ~~your~~ <sup>you</sup> ministry and mine." I know that God will bless our ministries, and great things will happen

not for us, but for the greater glory of God.

Sincerely,

Jim Beers

P.S. Leo has told me that he endorses the sentiments expressed in this letter.

Also, while in gay Torrance, I passed out the MCC bar cards in about ten gay bars, and we told gays from all over the world about our Holy Union.



1

BB

U. S. Address: J. Beers  
333 East 14<sup>th</sup> St.  
NY, NY. 10003





Metropolitan Community Church  
Rev. Gilbert Lincoln  
Post Office Box 1757

G. P. O.  
New York, N. Y. 10001  
U. S. A.

HOTEL PARQUE  
**TEN  BEL**

Direcc. Teleg. TENBELPARQUE  
LAS GALLETAS (TENERIFE)

PERSONAL + CONFIDENTIAL for Rev. Gilbert Lincoln







April 21, 1975

Dr. Willis Elliott  
New York Theological Seminary  
235 East 49th Street  
New York, N. Y. 10017

Dear Dr. Elliott,

In October of 1974, Mr. James Beers began calling on patients at DeWitt Nursing Home, 211 East 79th Street, under the auspices of the E.M.P.C. The head of the Patient Recreation Department, Mrs. Marion Lichtman, and her Assistant, Miss Jane Murphy, selected patients who had no visitors or family and were lonely, for Jim to call upon. He has been most conscientious in his visitations, which is usually twice a week, and he has formed some in-depth relationships with several of his patients.

Most recently he has volunteered to conduct Protestant services on the 1st Sunday of the Month at 2:30 p.m. The feedback from members of the staff about these services and his visiting has been very positive and appreciative.

I have met with Jim about once a month to discuss with him his work there. As of this date he has put in 83 hours and conducted two services. I recommend for your consideration his request for course credit for this work.

If you should have any questions or need further amplification do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

  
The Rev. James B. Jeffrey  
Senior Chaplain

JBJ/eh

cc: Mr. James Beers



April 8, 1975

Mr. James Beers  
Apt. 4K  
333 East 14th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10003

Dear Jim,

Needless to say, I was rather surprised to receive your letter and discover from John Barbone that you had decided to proceed on your own with a request for license at this time. However, remembering the effect of last year's "letter from Roy," I shall try to be temperate in my response.

It seems to me it would be premature for you to go up for licensing this year. I think you are going to need to have the full period of three years as an exhorter before you attempt a license. I say this because of the hesitations and questions which various board members raised the last time when you were relicensed as an exhorter. To be licensed, a candidate must have the backing of her/his pastor and board of directors. Apart from my own strong feeling that this is not the time to attempt it, I would think the board of the New York church would also be hesitant.

During a time when the New York church is going through a change in pastoral leadership, it would not be fair to an incoming pastor to present her/him with freshly-licensed staff ministers. The new minister should have some opportunity to shape the ministerial staff in line with his/her plans for the future direction of the church. While you know I have supported you in your quest for a viable ministry, I could not in good conscience press you on my successor when I have doubts in my own mind about your qualifications.

I expect to be home at the end of the month and shall, of course, want to talk with you about these matters. In the meantime, I would suggest you counsel with Ann, Jay, Eric or other board members. You should pay serious heed to the board's suggestions and criticisms at the time you were relicensed as an exhorter. I am sorry if this response is less than satisfying to you, but I have thought about you and your religious vocation for some continuous time now. I wish you might give prayerful consideration to my earlier suggestion that you pursue the diaconate. I think this a church office that better fits your capacities, talents and need to remain in the New York area.

But we can speak further of these things hereafter. Take care. Give my best to Leo. I'm glad to hear that the New York church is pulling together.

Sincerely,

cc; Mr. Eric Neilsen,  
Vice-Moderator  
Board of Directors



April 8, 1975

Mr. James Beers  
Apt. 4K  
333 East 14th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10003

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But we can speak further of these things hereafter. Take care. Give my best to Leo. I'm glad to hear that the New York church is pulling together.

Sincerely,

cc: Mr. Eric Neilson,  
Vice-Moderator  
Board of Directors

April 1, 1975

Dear Rev. Birchard:

Very simply! the message that I would like to convey to you is that I decided after prayerful meditation to apply for my license as a minister this May.

Dr. Elliott of New York Theological Seminary has agreed to prepare a letter for me to present to the credentials committee stating that I have completed the thirty-six credit course for a Masters of Professional Studies, but the degree will not be formally presented to anyone until May '76. However, before Dr. Elliott prepares the letter, he would like all possible information including a letter from you stating my participation with the church since April '72 and as an exhorter since 1/14/73.

The letter should briefly include my sanctuary involvement (including preaching), chairing numerous meetings, participating in various and numerous meetings, conducting communicants classes for eighteen months, manning the church telephone for seventeen months (this was a form of ministerial counseling), and my current participation as a member of the steering committee for the men's rap group and the publications committee.

Address: Dr. Willis Elliott  
New York Theological Seminary  
235 East 49th St.  
New York, New York 10017

Thank you and I hope that this letter greets you with happiness and peace in Christ.

Sincerely,

*Jim Beers*



April 4, 1973

Dear Rev. Ellwood:

I am sorry that I would like to convey to you in that I decided after great effort to apply for my license as a minister this way.

Dr. Ellwood of New York Theological

Seminary has agreed to prepare a letter for me to present to the Credentials Committee stating that I have completed the thirty-six credit course for a Master of Theological Studies, but the degree will not be formally presented to anyone until May. However, before Dr. Ellwood prepares the letter, he would like all possible information including a letter from you stating my participation with the church since April '72 and as an exhorter since 1/10/73.

The letter should briefly include my

pastor involvement (including preaching), carrying out various meetings, participating in various and numerous meetings, conducting seminars classes for children, women, men, and the church sessions for various times. This was a form of ministerial counseling, and my current position as a member of the church, and as an exhorter for the church group and the pastoral committee.

Address: Dr. William Ellwood  
New York Theological Seminary  
535 East 80th St.  
New York, New York 10019

Thank you and I hope that this letter

expresses you with happiness and grace in Christ.

Sincerely,







CASE PRESENTATION

BASED ON WILLIAM GLASSER'S REALITY THERAPY

JAMES A. BEERS

JANUARY 15, 1975



75

75

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
LIBRARY  
540 EAST 57TH STREET  
CHICAGO, ILL. 60637

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## CASE PRESENTATION

### BACKGROUND:

Age: 51  
Sex: Female  
Marital Status: Married (same sex ceremony)  
How long married: Two years  
Children: One daughter, 24 (from previous heterosexual marriage)  
Mate's age: 45  
Mate's occupation: Dept. of Social Services House Attendant  
(assigned to take care of mate)  
Previous Marriage: Marriage took place over twenty-five years ago. Counselee's husband whereabouts unknown.  
Counselee's Religion: Counselee and mate are members of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.  
Education: One year beyond high school  
Occupation: Nurse  
Employment: Counselee unable to work  
Source of Income: Subject is recipient of Social Service Assistance

### CHIEF COMPLAINT:

Mrs R. feels helpless, rejected, and extremely lonely. At times, she would like somebody to shoot her. Counselee needs to face reality, and change living conditions and situation. Mrs. R. cannot go on living under these circumstances. Her spouse is an alcoholic who neglects her job which is taking care of the counselee.

### HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMPLAINT:

Mrs R. is blind and suffers from other ailments . She is a lesbian. Mrs. R's previous lover died of pneumonia about three years ago. Then, her mate, Mrs U. moved into her apartment because the woman was dependent, and desperately needed a housekeeper. They were united in a service of Holy Union two years ago by an ordained minister of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. This young and striving denomination is a





legitimate church adhering to the principles of mainstream Christianity. This ceremony has no legal binding, but it is spiritually binding, and to the parties concerned it is considered as valid a covenant as a heterosexual marriage.

Mrs. R. considers this union the biggest mistake that she made in her lifetime. This relationship has been stormy from the outset. Mrs. U. has left the apartment on numerous occasions, and always returns a few days later drunk. She spends the time with her former husband who lures her with alcohol or with some female lover. The Department of Social Services about one year ago assigned Mrs. U. to take care of the counselee as the house attendant, but she still continues her frequent vacations from the apartment. The onvestigators have never visited the apartment although they have voiced some concern about the situation. Mrs. U. has recently brought her brother to the apartment to take care of Mrs. R. when she isn't there. He recently was released from a mental hospital, and he is no help to the counselee. I visit the counselee in her apartment as a member of the staff of the church. Several times, I have found her hungry and the apartment unclean.

Mrs. R. states that her spouse has no love for her. Mrs. R. claims that she still loves her dearly, but something has to change, and she doesn't want to go to a nursing home. She has a fear of such an institution. She would rather be in a hospital at the moment so that she could remove herself temporarily from this environment.



#### OTHER COMPLAINTS AND SYMPTOMS:

Mrs R. has other physical problems besides being blind. She has high blood pressure, diabetes (which caused the blindness), and she has a pacemaker. Mrs. R. is very upset about the situation. Her constant headache and high blood pressure is probably caused by this emotional problem. During the last month, I haven't seen the subject out of bed due to the blood pressure and extreme dizziness.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL DISTURBANCES:

Mrs R. was a practical nurse. This was her identity. She is unable to work now because of her blindness. She feels that her function as a human being is nil. Her need to help others cannot be accomplished. Mrs. R. also has a longing to return to her native Carribbean island.

#### RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULTIES:

Toward People: Mrs R. has a kind word for everybody even those who slight her. Her only dislike is her spouse whom she still loves. She loves to talk, and is quite knowledgeable, and also an interesting conversationalist.

Towards Self: She believes that God has been good to her, but in the light of the situation, she feels that she has little purpose or fulfillment in remaining alive.

Towards World: She loves all God's children, and the turmoil of the world distresses her.

?





## PREVIOUS TREATMENT:

It is apparent that the subject has never had any treatments for mental illness, and the patient thinks that I'm giving her visits solely for the purpose of celebrating communion.

## COUNSELING PLAN: *social intercourse*

1. Made preliminary visits with patient.
2. Gathered information concerning the subject in a series of friendly visits.
3. Determine where the patient is by using Dr. William Glasser's book "reality therapy"
  - a.) to what extent is she responsible
  - b.) What are her basic needs?
  - c.) Is there a key person in her life?
  - d.) What can be done to make her more "responsible"

This is done by using the three separate but interwoven procedures in Reality Therapy.

- e.) Have counselee tell you her plan.
- 4..Determine list of major crisis:
  - a.) Lost of identity and the familiar
  - b.) Feeling of rejection
  - c.) feeling of loneliness and discouragement
  - d.) Feeling of dependence
  - e.) Feeling of helplessness due to blindness
  - f.) Feeling of uselessness
- 5. Continue to focus on important points:

Try to give Mrs. R. a sense of meaning in life. Let her realize that life is still worth living. She still has a usefulness and a purpose. Encourage Mrs R. to investigate the alternatives.

*how?*





6. Spot imminent crisis:

Allow patient to realize that she is still a member of the human race and the Mystical Body of Christ.

7. Develop a new attitude toward living for Mrs. R. as far as possible.

Where is the counselee? Is she ready to face reality?

In Dr. Glasser's book "reality Therapy", responsibility is defined as the ability to fulfill one's needs and to do so in a way that does not deprive others of the ability to fulfill their needs.<sup>1</sup>

At first, I thought that Mrs. R. was "responsible". She seemed to have no wants despite her handicap, and I thought that Mrs. U. was definitely "not responsible" because she tries to fulfill her needs unsuccessfully by using alcohol. Thus, she is depriving her spouse of her basic need of love plus the needs essential to everyday living by drinking and being absent from the home.

Mrs. R. is not responsible because she is not able to fulfill her needs. During the first three months of this union, R. describes this period as a fulfillment of joy. However, she is unable to demonstrate love to her partner because she honestly believes that her spouse doesn't love her. R. is unwilling to act due to fear of losing what security exist, and she will not examine the alternatives. The counselee should be strong and firm enough to demand the ouster of this woman, Mrs U., and her brother from the apartment. Then, allow the Department of Social Services sent another house attendant to the apartment. Another alternative would be to place Mrs. R. in a nursing home. There she would be

Playing  
God

1. First, I should like to say:

After having to consider the various aspects of the  
human race and the various body of thought  
I, having a new attitude towards the world, I, as the  
resulting.

What is the argument? In the world, I have learned

In my opinion, the world is "a vast, unending  
as the ability to think about things and to be a part of

There are many things in the world that are not  
As I think, I should like to say: "The world is a vast, unending

have in mind that the world is a vast, unending  
and that the world is a vast, unending

needs necessarily to be a part of the world, and  
opinion of the world is a vast, unending

everyday living by thinking and doing things that are  
The world is not necessarily a vast, unending

her needs. During the first three years of the world, I

described this period as a "period of the world, and I  
unable to describe the world as a vast, unending

believe that the world is a vast, unending  
due to the fact of living and doing things that are

opinion the world is a vast, unending  
enough to describe the world as a vast, unending

from the argument, they show the world as a vast, unending  
and another world is a vast, unending  
would be to place the world as a vast, unending

assured of having atleast the basic essential needs. I think that this alternative is the best prospect. I will explain this point of view in more detail as we continue understanding the reality approach concerning this counselee.

According to William Glasser, the first basic need is the need to love and be loved and the need to feel that we are worthwhile to ourselves and to others. There are people who are unable to give and receive love and have no feeling of worth either to themselves or to others.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. R. does not receive love because she is left alone with a radio and a man who says nothing. Due to her blindness and her dependence on other people, she is unable to find anything or cook anything for herself when she is left alone. Most important, Mrs. R. is unable to communicate with another human being. The counselee doesn't have a feeling of usefulness. Mrs. R. does not feel that she is living a worthwhile life. Mrs. R. was a nurse. She mentioned to me that if she wasn't blind, she would still be a nurse today. She misses the opportunity to help other people.

Does Mrs. R. have a key person in her life? Mrs. U. was a key person in her life, but she is no longer because she fails to fulfill Mrs R's basic need of love. The counselee has a twenty-four year old daughter who has problems of her own including drug addiction and a few illegitimate children to support. Mrs R's daughter is not a key person in her life. The daughter hasn't visited or called her mother in a month.

I have been establishing a good rapport with the counselee which is essential in reality therapy. I have been visiting

Can you  
be?  
①





her for atleast two hours per week, and talking to her on the telephone every other day. She needs this key person who give her the necessary strength and encouragement to cope with reality instead of trying unrealistic ways of coping with life.

My main concern is to allow the counselee to be more "responsible".  
What can we do to make this possible? There has to be an effort on her part to change things. I can only steer her in the direction of reality. Mrs R. should be advised and encouraged to go into a nursing home. She only knows the disadvantages. Mrs R. should be told of the advantages of institutional living. In a nursing home, the subject would have the security of having adequate care and three meals a day. Meals that will be carefully and diet-ically planned for her. Most important, she would have compAN-ionship. Also, Mrs. R. possibly would feel more worthwhile because she could help someone else even if it is only in the form of encouragement. Also, some other resident in the home might fulfill their needs by reading to her or by doing some other kind jesture. In other words, the feeling of lonliness will be substituted by love.

We can allow this person be more "responsible" by using three separate but interwoven procedures.

The first procedure is involvement. I must become involved with the patient so that she can begin to face reality and see that her behavior is unrealistic. <sup>4</sup> The reality is that those headaches and high blood pressure are not just physical problems, but are caused by the counselee's refusal to face reality. They are emotional problems.

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Mrs R. should realize that God is good, fair and just. The Lord doesn't want us to be unhappy. He will provide for us. Mrs. R. has a knowledge of scripture. Once she recited psalm twenty-three with her spouse during a worship service soon after their Holy Union. I have been selecting scripture readings for her communion service which deal with the same theme as expressed in psalm twenty-three. Scripture that tells us that God cares, sees our every need, and He doesn't close His eyes when we are in want. I have found Psalm ninety-one and two Corinthians 4:16-17 very comforting. The two lines of verse from Saint Paul are: "For this reason we never become discouraged. Even though our physical being is gradually decaying, yet our spiritual being is renewed day after day, And this small and temporary trouble we suffer will bring us a tremendous and eternal glory much greater than the trouble."<sup>5</sup>

In Psalm ninety-one, we are told that the person who trusts in God is safe in person and family though ten thousand should fall around him. The plague is God's instrument for the recompense of the wicked and is under his control. God sends angels to keep the person of trust from stumbling on life's road and allow him to walk triumphantly over every peril. God declares that the person who holds fast to Him in love and is intimately acquainted with His name (His saving nature) will enjoy three-fold salvation: deliverance, honor and long life.<sup>6</sup>

The second procedure ask the counselor to reject unrealistic behavior of the counselee, but still accept the person and maintain involvement with her, and last, the counselor must

the A. C. could easily be seen in the fact that the

board doesn't seem to be very much interested in the

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the counselor must teach the counselee better ways to fulfill her needs within the confines of reality.<sup>4</sup>

I have been seeing this woman for a month. I have known her as a member of the congregation for almost two years. I am trying to allow this woman to see the realistic side of things. All her major crisis would seem to vanish if she was placed in a new setting like a nursing home. However, I visit people in nursing homes, and she will not be without problems in an institution. Most of these homes are very lacking in certain areas. She will have an adjustment problem, and Mrs R. must break up her marriage. This will not be easy, but it will be much better for her if I can continually get her involved in the realistic approach with the specific aim of having her reject her present situation as unsuitable, and show her how she can fulfill her basic need to love and be loved and the need to feel that she is worthwhile to herself and others.

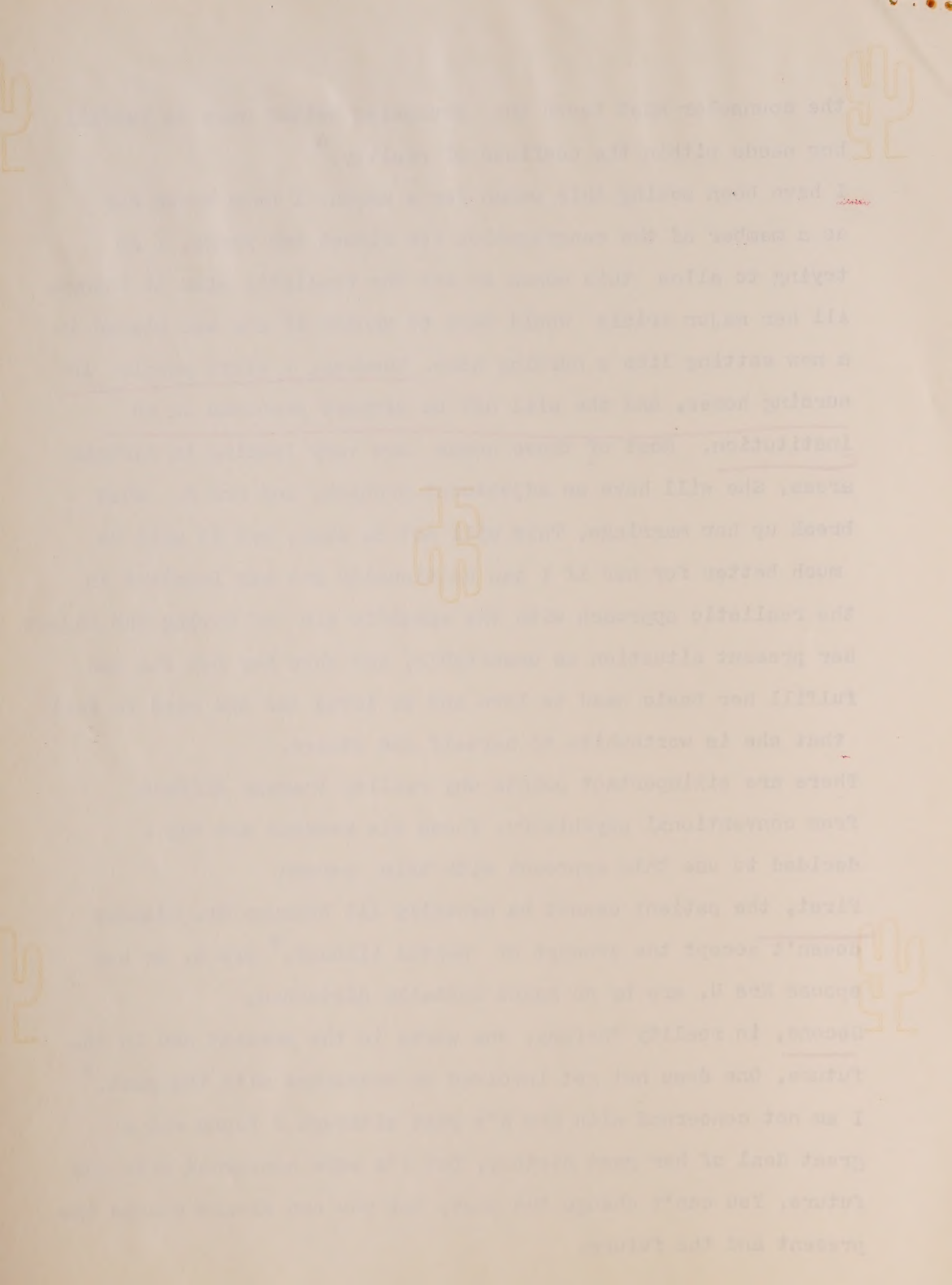
There are six important points why reality therapy differs from conventional psychiatry. These six reasons are why I decided to use this approach with this person.

First, the patient cannot be mentally ill because Dr. Glasser doesn't accept the concept of mental illness.<sup>7</sup> Mrs R. or her spouse Mrs U. are by no means mentally disturbed.

Second, in reality therapy, one works in the present and in the future. One does not get involved or concerned with the past.<sup>7</sup>

I am not concerned with Mrs R's past although I found out a great deal of her past history, but I'm more concerned with the future. You can't change the past, but you can always change the present and the future.





Third, allow the person to accept you as a friend.<sup>7</sup> Mrs. R. and I have become good friends. My function might be that of a deacon, but the visits are warm, friendly and casual.

Fourth, in reality therapy, we do not look for unconscious conflicts or the reasons for them. A person cannot become involved with us by excusing her behavior on unconscious motivation.<sup>7</sup> I'm not worried about Mrs. R. gaining understanding and insight into her unconscious mind. This is not necessary.

Fifth, reality therapy emphasizes the morality of behavior. This approach faces the issue of right and wrong which Dr. Glasser believes solidifies involvement.<sup>7</sup> I certainly don't consider a homosexual relationship immoral, but I do consider the behavior demonstrated in this households as immoral due to the uncontrolled drinking problem, promiscuity, and the neglectful behavior of the spouse. I want Mrs. R. to get involved in reality and realize this immoral situation.

Lastly, reality therapy teaches people better ways to fulfill their needs. The proper involvement will not be maintained unless the patient is helped to find out more satisfactory patterns of behavior.<sup>7</sup> In conventional psychiatry, they don't believe that teaching people to behave better is an important part of therapy.<sup>8</sup>

We have to remember that this woman has little to live for. She is blind. She is unable to work in her profession. In other words, she has lost her identity, her sense of being. She feels useless. In conclusion, this person must be allowed to become part of the human race again, and more important, the Mystical Body of Christ in which she has a role. We cannot allow this person lay in bed in loneliness and despair.

third, allow the person to know that he is not alone.

and I have become very interested in the work of

depression, but the whole thing is very complicated.

fourth, in dealing with the person who is depressed,

don't let him know that you are not interested in him.

involved with the person who is depressed, you must be

interested. It's not enough to say that you are interested

and that's all. You must be interested in the person

himself, really, deeply, and not just in the fact that

the person is depressed. This is the whole thing.

the person who is depressed is not alone. He is not

depressed because he is alone. He is depressed because

he is not interested in himself. He is not interested

in the person who is depressed. He is not interested in

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## FOOTNOTES

1. Glasser, William; Reality Therapy (Harper & Row); page 13
2. Glasser, p.9
3. Glasser, p.8
4. Glasser, p.21
5. Good News For Modern Man; 2 Cor.4:17-18
6. Interpreters One Volume Commentary; ed. Laymon, p.287
7. Glasser, p.44
8. Glasser, p.42









October 2, 1974

Dear Roy:

I'm writing this to you because I've had something on my mind for sometime and I'm disturbed about the church--the way certain things are handled especially the Sunday Worship service.

I am full aware that you have full charge over the Sunday service and anything pertaining to religion. However, the Church is our church, and we should be allowed to give constructive criticism. I feel that you try to please certain groups and by doing so you alienate the vast majority.

I have tried to get my point across, but it seems like I'm talking to a blank wall. I prayed to the Holy Spirit for guidance, and decided to list a few things that annoy me and others. These things have turned people off from MCC.

1. We're a church for gay people. We should have some sophistication and style. Exhorters should wear a clerical shirt at services, denim and sneakers should be banned from the altar, and the communion assistants should be properly instructed on what to do prior to the service.

2. Music makes the Worship Service alive. The selection of the hymns lately has improved, but some hymns like #2 from the 1940 Hymnal should be avoided. We don't have a choir, but that's no excuse. Before we had a choir, Howard Wells or Bill Cogswell led the congregation, and this helped greatly..

3. It is important that our Sunday service runs smoothly. Every Sunday since January 28, 1974, our service has been interrupted by the reading for five minutes from the scripture in Spanish. Last Sunday, over 85 persons had to listen to a foreign language which six other people understood. What are we supposed to do during that time? We certainly can't meditate. It's too distracting. For the exception of two people, the other Spanish speaking people understand English. Also, they have their own service. Also, I repeat what I said Tuesday night. It is inappropriate to add an advertisement to the scripture reading.

4. Two years ago when our congregation was small and new, we had prayer meeting attendance of ten to fifteen every week. Now, we're lucky if we get anybody. We are competing against West Side Discussion Group, the mostt widely attended gay discussion in New York City is held at the same time. At any meeting, there is atleast ten people who we're at MCC the previous Sunday. Also, gay men can get along with gay women, but it is difficult for many. The worst thing is to push gay women on gay men. I feel that we were more successful in prayer meetings when they were held in men's apartments. There were seven people at the last prayer meeting that I attended. There were four women and three men (including you and me).





5. This brings me to my last point. When gay women came to church a year or so ago, they were turned off and rightfully so. It was a gay man's church, but on the otherhand. Now, when some gay men come to church, they see three women and one man on the altar. They are turned off, and we never see them again.. This is the conclusion of my remarks. Please accept them in Christ name.

I said earlier that we can make constructive criticism. I want these remarks to be taken in such a way that we can approve our services and build a large STEADY congregation in a positive constructive way.

Sincerely in His Name,

Jim Beers



September 30, 1974

Dr. Willis Elliott - Dean  
New York Theological Seminary  
249 East 49th Street  
New York, New York

Dear Dean Elliott:

This letter is to share with you our preceptions of Mr James A. Beers after a recent visit with us here in Phoenix - August 13 -21, 1974. This visit was made specifically to gain educational insights about the method we have used to develop a Ministry to the Aged and Handicapped confined to institutions and/or nursing homes in the Phoenix area, and to explore how Mr. Beers might begin a similar work in New York City in conjunction with his continuing education program at New York Theological Seminary. The primary areas in which Mr. Beers became an active participant included:

- 1) Hospital Ministry - Surgical Unit - Pre and Post Operative Visitation.
- 2) Hospital Ministry - Psychiatric Unit - Attempted Suicide of a Handicapped Person.
- 3) Rehabilitation Center Ministry - Long Term - Lonliness, Isolation and Despair.
- 4) Nursing Home Ministry - Worship Services - Individual Visitation - Reconciliation of Staff and Patients.

We believe that Mr. Beers demonstrated ability and willingness to work long hours under less than desirable conditions and that he did in fact become a meaningful instrument to show God's love and concern for each individual he worked with no matter which of the above categories that individual might have come under. We also found that Mr. Beers worked well with individuals in all age brackets (from 17 to 103). The majority of individuals Mr. Beers worked with were women and again he worked exceptionally well with both men and women.

Least you believe that we found no areas in which we feel Mr. Beers needs development let us share an important area of our concern. Mr. Beers made the comment that the one area he did not work with during his visit with us was that of death. As five of the individuals Mr. Beers worked with have in fact died, we believe that Mr. Beers has come in contact with many aspects of death and dying without realizing it for lack of experience. We would encourage Mr. Beers involvement, through the Chaplaincy, with an acute care facility to gain experience in this very important aspect of working with the aged and handicapped.

We believe the most positive growth occurred in an area that Mr. Beers himself expressed concern about. He had a number of self doubts and





genuine concerns about the fact that he might not be able to work with individuals confined to institutions and/or nursing homes. Frankly, in the first hours of his visit we shared that concern.

A member of my staff, reported to me his witness of a gradual awareness of talent and ability and watched it develop much the same way a flower opens in the fresh morning sunlight. We consider this aspect to be the most valuable part of Mr. Beers experience with us...an awareness that indeed he can do much more than he thought he could when he first arrived. This is an area that we know he will continue to work on as he gains more and more experience.

Mr. Beers spent a total of 112 hours in 9 days working side by side with us in a Special Field of the Ministry that he has indicated he may have a call to. We would not presume to recommend what educational plan or actual experience would best enable Mr. Beers to respond to that call. We do see a real need for experience to compliment Mr. Beers continuing education. We would also encourage Mr. Beers to attend many of the special workshops held throughout the country dealing with the field of Gerontology.

Both the States of Arizona and California do give credits for the type of work that Mr. Beers did while he was in our midst as part of the required continuing education programs for those working with the aged or handicapped. The number of credits, of course, depends on many factors, but ordinarily this experience would allow up to 4 credits. We do believe that Mr. Beers met the requirements as they exist here. We do believe it would be encouraging if Mr. Beers were able to obtain similar credit within the ~~limits of~~ <sup>limits of.</sup> the requirements of New York Theological Seminary.

If we may assist you with any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Lord is with you,

Joseph E. Gilbert  
Pastor

Jim:

For your information the five who died in the order they died:

Annie Gould  
Jane Morrissey  
Crystal Hubbard  
Thelma Baker  
James Knox









Record of JAMES ANTHONY BEERS  
(Mr., Miss, Mrs.) 333 E. 14 ST  
NY. 10003, NY

Office of the Registrar  
WASHINGTON SQUARE EAST, NEW YORK 3, N.Y.

Date and place of Birth MARCH 31 1938, NY NY Permanent Address

### Degrees Held

Specialization (M.A.)

### Specialization ( )

**Adviser: Prof.**

Adviser: Prof.

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### Specific and background requirements

### Specific and background requirements

Foundation Courses (Ed. D), as and if required by Sponsoring Committee

### Specialization requirements

Tools (Ed.D) as required by Sponsoring Committee

Status: not matriculated

[illegible]

Degree Granted

Not Valid as an Official  
Transcript Without Seal  
and Original Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

by

Registrar

[illegible]





Dear Roy-

Feeling that letters are a coward's way of dealing with people - they cannot answer back - but also knowing that it is hard for us to talk - I am writing to you about the letter you wrote to Jim Beers. Your letter and attack is destructive, and it must not be long accepted or must Jim be misled into believing that you are being frank for his own good. Where was the necessary tenderness, a willingness to understand even if you cannot always condone, and a confirmation of Jim's right to be the person he is - the cruellest ~~offer~~ affront is treating or in this case telling Jim what exactly you think he is. Jim longs to be understood for what he might be and, at the same time, to be forgiven for what he is. You are in the position to make Jim expand, feel more decent and wiser than he suspects himself to be.

Acceptance of Jim does not require excessive interest nor unrealistic flattery nor agreement at every turn & but tacit recognition that he is a separate person with with individual ways of acting and feeling that may not be yours

Dear Mr. West

Feeling that letters are a cowardly  
way of dealing with people - I am  
writing to you about the letter  
you wrote to Jim (Bess). Your letter  
and attack is absolutely correct and  
I am not at all surprised or  
surprised into believing that  
you are being frank for his own  
good. There was the necessary  
tactlessness, or willingness to make  
attacks even if you cannot always  
convince and a confirmation of  
Jim's right to be the person he is  
- the cruellest effort is  
treating or in this case talking  
Jim what exactly you think he is  
Jim says to his understanding for  
what he might be and, at the  
same time, to his feelings for  
what he is. For all in the  
position to make Jim expand, for  
more direct and wider than he  
suggests himself to be.  
Acceptance of Jim also is  
a positive expression of interest  
and a positive expression of  
of every kind but a direct recognition  
that he is a separate person with  
with individual ways of acting  
and feeling that must be



Roy but are his. Please try to hear what people are saying to you and confirm their right to be separate people. A touchy, sensitive person like Jim can be a nuisance and there is bound to be a nerve struck now and again. But if you would accept yourself as you are you could accept Jim as he is and not be overly alert to evidence that he would think or do something subversive to you. Jim would be correct to withdraw from your authority, for anyone who chronically provokes anxiety and tension and defensiveness is not worth having as a friend or as a ~~man~~ minister — I am very unhappy about this letter — knowing as I do that you can be very loving + caring — I am so sorry —

With Love  
Eric Neilson











**METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH of NEW YORK**  
BOX 1757 • GENERAL POST OFFICE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10001

Rev. Roy Birchard, pastor

Services: 300 Ninth  
Avenue at 28th Street

April 17, 1974

Church Phone: (212) 674-4850  
Pastor's Residence: (212) 369-8513

Personal.

Jimmy,

I would be less than honest if I pretended I was not seriously upset by what you had to say last night.

Just because you have managed to hold onto that telephone, do not think you can dictate terms to me, or through the weight of your influence establish overall church policy on your own.

I am beginning to regret that I have shielded you from criticism. Every time you speak aloud in church I get people telling me not to let it happen again, and up to now I have said nothing to you. I am afraid you have confused fierce, loud noises with forthright expression. There is more to public speaking than volume, and more to leadership than the number of times you appear on a platform.

Jimmy, I was very disappointed by what you had to say about the membership classes. I feared this was going to happen. I do not know of one person in this whole world I would dare publicly claim "came to the faith" because of me. That would be presumptuous of me beyond words. It is sinful.

The church exists to serve God and people--not to "process" people in classes as though they were cattle, or "numbers" in a bar. The people who, of their own free will, choose to join MCC do so for a great variety of reasons, most of which have nothing to do with either you or me. To claim that we--and not God--have brought these people here is to set ourselves in God's place. Nor are MCCers children or mentally retarded. Nor are they to be treated as such. They are adults, as intelligent as you or I.

Nor are we a theater company where people "perform." There is a great deal more to the Christian ministry than making brave noises in front of a congregation. My field work minister used to say seventy percent of the ministry consisted of listening to other people; otherwise we cannot begin to understand them or say anything to them that will be helpful to them.

I am afraid I have let you tell me when and where you were going to perform rather than seriously sit down and think through where you are, or where all this program you have been involved in is going to end. Not everyone is necessarily called to the pastorate. I have prayed, and do pray, that we gain more light about what your calling is. Humble-





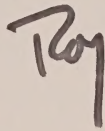
ness, however, had better be part of it. And consideration of other peoples' needs and sensitivities.

It was through letting things drift like this that we lost Philip. I am seriously concerned that you not so alienate yourself from the congregation that you end up painting yourself into a corner like he did.

I am glad that your involvement in the church has helped you increase your own self-assurance and put away some of the things you formerly feared. But we must all be careful lest our self-assurance appear to other people like us as pride and arrogance. I know you to be sincere, devoted, faithful and hard-working. I pray that your own self-esteem continues to grow so that you do not measure your worth as a human being by the "role" you play in this, or any other, church.

I have said these things because I care about you and Leo. Please forgive me if I have hurt your feelings, but it is not fair to you to be less than honest.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be the name "Roy". The letters are stylized and connected, with a long vertical stroke at the end.



January 15, 1974

Dear Rev. Birchard and the  
Board of Directors:

I am requesting the renewal of my license to be an exhorter of our congregation and the Universal Fellowship.

According to the by-laws of the Fellowship, the purpose of having an exhorter is to give a person time to examine the possibility of becoming a minister.

During my first year as an exhorter, I applied at New York Theological Seminary. I was accepted, and I presently attend classes at the Seminary. I intend to continue taking courses there.

During this year, I have done many assignments with the guidance and direction of our pastor, Rev. Roy Birchard. I have led mid-week activities, conducted the Worship Service with the visiting preacher in the pastor's absence three times, and performed numerous small but important assignments. These included sending mailing to former visitors, and sent personal letters to new visitors, get well notes, thank you notes and letters to inactive members (etc).  
one at the present time I have instructed eight groups of new membership classes ( including one at the present time). Through the Holy Spirit, I have led fourty people to become members of our congregation.

I intend helping this congregation to grow through His infinite wisdom, and I humbly ask you to renew my license.

Sincerely In His Name,

*James A. Beers*  
James A. Beers  
Exhorter







**METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH of NEW YORK**

360 WEST 28TH STREET

NEW YORK, N. Y. 10001

Rev. Roy Birchard, pastor

(212) 674-4850

May 9, 1973

Admissions Office  
New York Theological Seminary  
235 East 49th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10017

Gentlepeople:

As pastor of Metropolitan Community Church of New York, I wish to recommend James Beers, an exhorter in our congregation, for admission to your school. Within our fellowship, an exhorter is a lay preacher feeling a call by the Lord and licensed by the local congregation on an annual basis.

Mr. Beers has been serving in this capacity since the first of this year, after having worked with us for some time before that. His primary responsibility is planning and conducting our mid-week program--involving prayer meetings, socials, book discussions, etc. He also assists me in the spiritual preparation of persons desiring membership in the congregation and carries out other responsibilities from time to time. His spouse is the treasurer of our church.

Jim is serious, hard-working, responsible and devoted to the mission of our fellowship. I have come to depend upon him in many different ways, and I have found that I can. I am sure you would find him a credit to your school.

In addition, I think the point of view he represents would be an asset to you in your efforts to provide a seminary actively serving the many different communities to be found in the urban scene.

If you have questions I might be able to help you with, please feel free to call upon me.

Sincerely yours,

*Roy Birchard*









NOTES AND REFLECTIONS  
FROM READINGS IN  
EARLY CHRISTIAN THOUGHT  
JAMES A. BEERS





## ORIGEN: DE PRINCIPIIS

We are told in the preface of this treatise that the Word of God was present before Christ. The Word was present in Moses and the prophets. When Origen outlines the particular points clearly delivered in the teachings of the Apostles, he definitely states that Jesus Christ remained God when He became man. Jesus assumed a body like ours, but the Christ was born of a Virgin.

Here are two important points that need reflection and consideration. First, the Word of God was present before Christ. Therefore, The Word was not made, but always existed. Second, God came down and assumed a mortal and corruptible body like ours. In other words, Jesus walked in our shoes to prove to us that He loved us.

Origen was not clear concerning the origin of the Holy Spirit, but he did state that the Spirit inspired each Saint, and the same Spirit was present in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. As far as I'm concerned this is proof that the Spirit was working and existing long before the annunciation of the angel to Mary, and therefore was not made, but always existed.

Origen further states that the Scriptures were written by the Spirit of God. He states that the letters of Peter were not divinely inspired, and do not belong in the New Testament. In my account of Hermas the Shepherd, I give my reasons why I feel that the works of the Shepherd should be included in the New Testament.

Origen describes God as a sanctifying power, incomprehensible and incapable of being measured. God is not to be thought of as a Being either a body or existing in a body.

Therefore, God is not a human being. God cannot be called Father or Mother in terms of human family relationships. God is above these mortal descriptions. The term Father as expressed throughout the writings of the Church Fathers is the reverent name of God brought down through the generations. As the Holy Spirit has been referred to as a woman and she in Proverbs eight. Also, the Holy Mother the Church has been referred to as The Spirit and she. When we call God the Father, we don't mean an old man with a beard, and when we say the Holy Spirit is a woman, we are not talking about a woman in a beautiful white dress. The Church Fathers have proved the Holy Trinity using these terms: Father and Son, and we cannot change these terms to please women who feel uncomfortable calling God their Father. No matter what we call Him, He is still an incomprehensible substance not existing in a body or a body.

This brings us to chapter two of book one of Origen. Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of God. We know that God assumed human nature to dispense grace to us, and that Wisdom, the Holy Spirit, has Her existence nowhere else save in Him who is the beginning of all things. Therefore, God the Father to be called a Father must have a son. If all the things which are the father's also belong to the son. Then, Christ is omnipotent, omnipresent and eternal like the Father. All the titles of God the Father are also that of His Son, Jesus Christ.

In chapter five of book one, Origen quotes Paul concerning the Savior "Who is above all principality and power and might and dominion and every man that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." This is further proof that Christ is God and equal to God the Father.





In the last three chapters of this book, Origen discusses all the various kinds of beings that God created. No rational being existed who is not capable of good and evil. We see many people in this world that have no use for God. But, they do house the Trinity. They are capable of salvation. It is always possible for the good in them to triumph over the evil.

In chapter six of book two, Origen ask questions concerning the Incarnation. Could the Wisdom of God enter the womb of a woman? Why was Jesus greatly troubled in death? Why does he sometimes appear very human and at othertimes appear very devine. Origen tries to answer these questions by stating that His soul is like an iron in the fire, has been perpetually placed in the Word, and has been perpetually placed in the Wisdom and perpetually placed in God- is God in all that it does and understands and therefore can be called neither convertible nor mutable.

I feel that Origen does not answer his own questions clearly enough. Perhaps, I will find the answers in some of the later writings. I feel that Origen is lacking in this conclusion. I would really like to know why Jesus appears so very human in one incident, and very devine in another.

This brings us to book four which deals with the reading and interpretation of Divine Scripture. Many prophesies of the old testament and predictions of Jesus came true. However, many people disbelieve because they take the scriptures too literally. They were looking for a King to save Israel, and they expected the lion and the lamb to sit down next to each other and be friends. Many people discounted some prophets as unwise and foolish, but the answer to this is found in Deuteronomy, "God chooses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." There are many dark sayings and enigmas in both the old testament and new testament that are hard to understand. Origen gives us good advice when he ask us to pray for the mind of Christ, that we might know the things freely given to us by God. Origen refers to Luke 11:52, "Woe to you lawyers, because you have taken away the key of knowledge; you have not entered yourselves and those you were entering, you have hindered."

Origen might not have been too clear concerning the origin of the Holy Spirit, but he believed in the power of the Spirit which is very important.





## REFLECTIONS FROM READINGS ON GNOSTICISM

From Leitzman- History of the Christian Church; vol one

In the stories of Jusin's Baruch with the female <sup>Eden</sup> to Elohim, and Simon the Magician's Heleena, we find that these so-called messiahs needed a divine helper. These cults were satisfying the Greeks who had given up their traditions of many centuries where they worshipped multiple gods. Is this where the Christian Church began to use the Holy Spirit as an important role in the Church? The Holy Spirit being Wisdom. Wisdom being female. This is found in Proverbs Eight

The following accounts and reflections were inspired from the Holy Spirit and H. Jonas, The Gnostic Religion, pages 103-111

These "messiahs" like Simon Magus were phonies. Only God could ascend to heaven by his own power. Simon tried to ascend, and the great ascension became a big flop causing his death. This is another proof that Jesus and only He was the true God who dwelled this earth.

Thomas the Apostle is given the credit for "The Hymn of the Pearl". This is a story rich in symbolism about a young son of a King who was sent to an enemy Kingdom to bring back the precious pearl that belonged to his country. The general interpretation is that the young man is Christ. He enters the world where they do not recognize him because he is wearing terrestrial garments because he has left his own in the upper realm. When the son of the King returned, he was well and joyously received by the King of Kings. This gospel is not called a passion. Thus, it was left out of the new testament. It is not considered a gospel although it was the means in which an Apostle brought the good news to India. In my opinion, this is a gospel even though there is no suffering, atonement or forgiveness, but there is a sacrificial element in the Savior's descent in that he was willing for the Pearl's (the soul) sake to take upon himself an exile's fate and to duplicate in his person the history of that which he came to redeem.

REFLECTION AND AN ACCOUNT ON THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS  
Reference: Apostolic Fathers; Goodspeed

Some books were not accepted by the Church Fathers as canonical, and do not appear in the New Testament. One of these book is the five visions, twelve commands and ten parables of Hermas. He was a simple home-loving Shepherd. Personally, I feel that this is the reason that this book did not make the approved scripture. Origen states that divine scripture was written by the Spirit of God. It is quite obvious that the woman who appeared in the visions is the representative of the Holy Spirit at one time, and then Holy Mother the Church in another vision. Thus, these writings were inspired by the Spirit. The Church Fathers could tolerate the writings of Peter - a fisherman who became Bishop of Rome, but they couldn't tolerate the account of a Shepherd who lived his whole life as a shepherd. In the visions, Hermas sees an old woman who states that she is Holy Mother the Church. Hermas ask the woman if you are the Church which is new, why are you so old? The woman states that she always was, and that is why she is old. She was created first of all. Is this feminine figure the Holy Spirit. Again, Proverbs eight "I was firmly set from the beginning, before earth came into being"





In the fourth vision, Hermas is shown a monster that could destroy whole peoples. The shepherd had faith and did not run away. Now, a young woman appeared dressed all in white and she identified herself as the Holy Catholic Church, and said to him because of your faith you have escaped great affliction. Today, we have faith that God will save us from great affliction. If we have the courage to be what we are, and to be honest with everybody. Then, we have nothing to fear because God will protect us if we only have the faith that he will shield us from harm.

I am a Christian who happens to be a homosexual. I am not going to shout it all over the streets, but if my employer or my family ask me the question- I will tell them because you cannot live a lie, and I have enough faith to know that I have no fear in telling the truth. Like Hermas, I will not run away from the monster in fear, and the Lord will bless me for this.

In the fifth vision, Hermas was given commands and parables to write down. These commands were simple, and I feel that we can become better Christians in the twentieth century if we keep these simple commands.

They simply say: 1. We should believe in God, the one who created all things; 2. Be sincere; 3. Be truthful; 4. Be pure of heart; 5. Be patient and understanding; 6. Follow command #1 by having faith, fear and self control; 7. Keep God's commands and you will be strong; 8. Have self-control; 9. Do not doubt the mercy and forgiveness of God. Forgiveness is there and He will give it to you; 10. Do not be sad for sadness is the sister of doubt and bad temper; 11. Do not listen to false prophets, and 12. Cast off from yourself every evil desire.. Clothe yourself in good and holy desire.

The ten parables caution us not to attach ourselves to material things. We are not living in our true home. We are visitors in a foreign land. All we have to do is look out of our front windows in Manhattan, and we know that very few people truly believe in such things.

The other parables concern themselves with symbols which are natural things: trees, landscape, and mountains. In one of the parables, there are many trees. Some trees are all dried up. Some trees are flourishing. The trees that are dried up represent the lost souls as the flourishing flora represent the souls that are ready for eternal life.





## REFLECTIONS ON ATHANATIUS TREATISE "THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD OF GOD"

In parts one to three, Athanasius states that God is the Cause of all, despite what others say, and God is infinite. He has no beginning. Mind did not originate itself. Thus, the "word" only assumed the body of a man, but always was.

I had my doubts about taking the position of Marcellus at the reenactment of the Council of Nicea, but here a number of years after the council, Athanasius is saying almost the same thing that Marcellus was condemned for. That is; that Jesus assumed the body of a man, but always was and ever will be God. Athanasius is trying to persuade Christians that Arians are wrong. Jesus is eternal. His ideas here are close to Marcellus who believed that the Word came down, assumed a human body, and returned to the Godhead after his work was completed. Athanasius disagrees with Marcellus when the latter states that Jesus, the human being is not eternal.

In parts 4 to 10, Athanasius deals with death. All men are corruptible and lack true knowledge. The devil had taken over, and was trying to destroy God's work. God wanted to save us. He alone could give us such grace. God took our body from a stainless, spotless virgin which was liable to corruption and death. The Word knew that corruption could not be gotten rid of except through death. Through the death of the Word, all men were clothed with incorruption in the promise of the resurrection.

My reflection on this section is that only God could give us the grace to regain incorruption. The Word, the Son of God, is God, and through His death we are saved.

In parts 11 to 16, Athanasius discusses some of the reasons for the Incarnation. The main concern of God was the worship of false idols of wood and stone.

Today, people have turned away from God, and they have made power, influence and money their gods. This was evidenced by the Watergate crisis.

In part 17, Athanasius states that being in the Virgin, the Word sanctified her body. He was not changed. His being in everything does not mean that He shares in the nature of everything. This brings me back to what Origen stated in *De Principiis* (Book 2, Chap 6) and it wasn't stated clearly. That the word is God and cannot change.

In parts 19 and 20, he gives his proof of the incarnation. The earth shook, curtains were torn in half and other phenomena occurred. We as twentieth century Christians have historical proof of the death of the Messiah.

The next twelve parts of this treatise answer the questions why did Jesus go through this agony. As Christians living in the twentieth century, we couldn't claim that a man living two thousand years ago was God if he died in bed succumbing to his own nature or if this man that we call God just escaped into the mountains and disappeared for a few days. Christ, our God, had to take the worst route: Death on the Cross. The most horrible method of putting a person to death. Also, would His death on the cross seem credible; not if he waited three days to prove that He was really dead, but arose the very next day.





In Athanasius day, Christians longed for death. Today, this faith is not as strong as in the year 350, but we still strive and look forward to eternal life. Can a dead man influence people for almost two thousand years? Can a dead man expel evil spirits? Jesus can do these things because "He Lives".

In parts 33-40, Athanasius gives many reasons why the Jewish people are in error in not accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Our Savior, alone, is different from all the prophets in the old testament. Jesus birth was announced by a star and a chorus of angels. People set their hopes on Jesus almost from the time that he was born. Christ childhood is known. His death answered scripture. Jesus gave blind people their sight. No prophet of the old testament can claim any of the above. Besides, there has been no more prophets since the coming of Jesus.. Athanasius seems to give enough concrete proof that Jesus is the Messiah.

In parts 41-55, Athanasius gives the reasons why the pagan Gentiles are in error for not accepting Christ as the Messiah. The Gentiles feel that he should have manifested himself by more nobler parts of creation such as the moon or stars instead of manifesting Himself in a body. They also felt that if God wanted to save mankind; God could have done it by the mere signification of His will instead of the Word's assuming a body. Athanasius answered these arguments by stating that as man is already in existence and already in the process of corruption and ruin; then it was natural and right for the Word to use a human instrument (a human body), and by that means unfold himself to all. God worked through man to reveal Himself everywhere. Jesus Christ is the only one who cured people and drove out demons. The masses of people ceased worshipping idols and petitioning oracles. Why? because Jesus in truth is the Son of God, the Existent Word, Wisdom and Power of the Father. His wonders were the works of no human. Greek mythology is filled with fairy tales, but no god died and rose to life again three days later. Athanasius concludes this treatise by telling the Christians of his day, and ours that we should prepare ourselves for the resurrection when we become incorruptible. Christians today like those in Athanasius day should prove its truth by studying scripture and imitating the lives of the Saints.





## NOTES AND REFLECTIONS FROM:

The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, J. Pelikan; pages 201-229

Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, excommunicated three Bishops, including Arius, because they said, thought and preached that the Son of God is a creature and has come into being. He has not been truly begotten, and there was a time when He did not exist. At the Council of Nicea, the Church Fathers passed this section of the creed: "Son of God begotten from the Father, only begotten; that is from the ousia of the Father, begotten not made, homoousios with the Father through whom (namely the Son) all things came into being, things in heaven and on earth. They included a paragraph condemning those who refuse to believe.

Arius and his followers could not take this decision. Arius explained his faith to mean that the Word was a perfect creature of God, but not as one of the creatures. This calling the Son "only begotten"; that is from the ousia of the Father could not be accepted by him and his followers.

The group of anti-Arians including Athanasius, Didymus, Hilary and Ambrose had it their way. It seems to me that all of them, Arians and anti-Arians believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior, and that they were making Christianity more complicated to follow. They were making a big fuss over words.

The Anti-Arians were following the thinking of Origen concerning only begotten son. They also laid down as the official tradition and doctrine the thinking of Origen that the angels were the servants of God, but left the time of their existence as a matter for investigation and speculation. They canonized this tradition as dogma stating that God was not only creator of heaven and earth, but all things visible and invisible.

I feel that this is very disturbing. Here, these intellectual men of the time declaring dogma concerning things like the creation and existence of angels which they themselves admitted that they couldn't fully understand.

## REFLECTIONS AND NOTES CONCERNING THE NICENE CONTROVERSY,

CONSTANTINE II ? This Emperor was wholly political and sided with the viewpoint of the anti-Arians because this viewpoint would be acceptable by all the west and most of the East. Constantine was not even a baptised Christian at the time of the Council of Nicea. The Emperor was later baptised by Eusebius of Nicomedia (who was an Arian).

This is proof to me that the Council of Nicea was definitely political, and the Arians lost the vote at the council due to the influence of Constantine, but eventually became the true victors of the Council of Nicea.

ARIUS: Arius came from Alexandria where it was not unusual to have one's own doctrine. Arians scarcely referred to Scripture except in quest of an isolated text to confirm conclusions reached without its help. I feel that this is in complete contrast to Athanasius whose treatise on the Incarnation was thoroughly inspired by the Scriptures. Is this why Arius lost? His findings were not truly inspired by scripture; that is the Holy Spirit.







Arius believed that God the Father is eternal, without beginning. A Father must exist before his son. Therefore, Father alone is God. The son is so-called only in a lower and improper sense. The Son is like other creatures although only begotten.<sup>2</sup> The Son is the Logos and was created from nothing. He was not created from the divine substance "ousia". Thus, the Son did not always exist. He was adopted as Son and does not share in the divine nature.<sup>3</sup>

#### EUSEBIUS OF NICOMEDIA:

Eusebius was chief sympathizer of Arius. His argument at the council was that if we call Him the Son of the Father and uncreate, then we are saying that He is one in essence. This is what the Arians didn't believe. Eusebius was an arch-enemy of Marcellus.<sup>3</sup>

#### EUSEBIUS OF CAESARIA:

Eusebius was the leader of the group at the council that became known as Semi-Arians. They sided towards the Arians,<sup>4</sup> and bitter against the arguments of Marcellus. Eusebius dubbed the latter "Monarchians"<sup>5</sup>

Eusebius put forward the creed of his own local church, and it became part of the Nicene Creed.<sup>6</sup>

Eusebius was against the phrase in doctrine, "through whom all things were made in heaven and on earth." Eusebius had this point of view because he was influenced by Origen, who stated that no one could be sure when the angels came into existence.

Eusebius accepted Emperor Constantine's point of view for the sake of peace. The anti-Arian victory brought with it the recognition of Eusebius and acceptance of his creed after the insertion of Homo-ousios.<sup>7</sup>

Eusebius became politically involved by siding with the non-baptised Emperor. He compromised his beliefs for the sake of peace.

#### ATHANATIUS:

Athanatius regarded the Arians as a group who permitted a worship of Christ which was a little above that which is idolotry. Athanatius emphasized that if Christ be not co-substantial with the Father, then it is idolotry to worship Him.<sup>8</sup>

Athanatius emphasized the phrase "True God of True God", as the Son of God as God came forth from God emanating from Him as Logos and Son. By using this phrase, both for the Father and the Son, it states in fact that as the Father is the one real veritable God, so the Son is likewise the one real veritable God begotten by Him, emanating from Him, and yet not differing from Him in real veritable deity.<sup>10</sup>

Athanatius was young, about 25, and I think that he was less than the force that he is given credit for.

#### HOSIUS OF CORDOBA:

Hosius is responsible for insertion of these two phrases: "Through whom all things were made, both in heaven and on earth".

Hosius, the only Western Bishop at conclave was influenced by Irenaeus and Tertullian.<sup>10</sup>

Hosius journeyed to Alexandria to settle dispute on Constantine's advice. Thus, Hosius thinking became an important part of the doctrine of the Christian Church because Constantine wanted to make sure that the creed was accepted by all the Western Bishops.

#### ALEXANDER OF ALEXANDRIA:

Bishop Alexander had trouble with Arius since 318. The Bishop had





The Bishop had previously had Arius excommunicated prior to the council. Alexander, Hosius and Eustathius are the three main strong arms that put the creed together and finally had a doctrine passed at the Council of Nicea.<sup>10</sup>

#### EUSTATHIUS OF BEROEA:

Eustathius was of the school of Antioch. He was a zealous opponent of the Arianist teachings. He was also opposed to the conservative or moderate majority because he disapproved of the principles of Origenism.

Eustathius taught that Christ possessed a complete human soul. This was denied by the Arians, and perhaps by Athanasius at this point.

Eustathius was not liked by Eusebius of Caesaria because of his association with Marcellus, which they dubbed Sabellianism, and these were the followers of Socrates.

#### MARCELLUS OF ANCYRA:

Marcellus was an opponent of the Arians. He reacted toward Sabellianism. He rejected the pre-existence of the special properties of the son prior to the Incarnation. Marcellus limited the terms Son, Image, and first born to the incarnate Christ. Thus, Marcellus believed that the incarnation was only a temporary and incidental state. The Logos having completed His redemptive work, laid aside the manhood which He had assumed, surrendered to the Kingdom of the Father, and was again merged in the deity becoming what He was before the Incarnation. The Council added this phrase to Article VIII of the creed: "and coming to judge the living and the dead", and later at the Council of Constantinople "whose Kingdom shall have no end". These phrases were added to rule out the teachings of Marcellus who taught that the reign of Christ would end when He delivered over the completed Kingdom to the Father. He referred to Paul (1Cor. 15)<sup>11</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES FOR NICEAN CONTROVERSY (Complete listing of titles and authors listed in Bibliography)

1. Walker; pp106-114
2. Burns; p4-10
3. Hughes; p189
4. Briggs; p214
5. Briggs; p238
6. Mortimer; p67
7. Burn; p38
8. Burn; p138
9. Burn; p119
10. Briggs; pp230-233
11. Briggs; p237





notes and reflections on Augustine's treatise on the Holy Trinity  
Source: Basic Writings, Vol 2, editor: Whitney J. Oates

Augustine tried to give all the scriptural evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity and searches out anything that might be reasonably considered to indicate the nature of God as Trinity.

In the first two books, Augustine states that God is incorporeal. He has no corporeal attributes. This brings to my mind that God is neither man, woman, white, black, heterosexual or homosexual and whatever.

Augustine states that there are three in one God. All three are eternal. The Word is eternal. We have this proof in John I. Also, God being incorporeal is therefore changeless.

Augustine answers the argument that Jesus is not equal to the Father because Jesus said "My Father is greater than I". Augustine answers this argument that He Himself in the form of God is also greater than Himself, but likewise in the form of a servant greater than Himself.

In book three, Augustine states that God is changeless, but God causes all corporeal things to change, but the soul can partake of that unchangeable good which is God; however the human body can change and not the soul.

God is invisible. Nobody has seen Him. God has used angels, prophets, and He has assumed a human body so that he could become the one supreme Mediator between God and man.

I believe that God works through all of us and is in us, and none of us have seen God, but we have to have faith.

In book four, I am reminded that God loves us and came down to earth to prove how great that love was for us.

Book five reminds us that how intelligent you are (even Augustine), you cannot conceive the greatness of God. He cannot be measured. God lacks nothing. He is the greatest, and cannot be changed. Thus, the Arians were wrong. If Jesus is God, He always was God. He was not made. He couldn't be an accident. Accidents change things. God is unchangeable.

The sixth book exhorts us to believe in the Trinity, not a three-fold God. Augustine brings this out more clearly in book seven. There, he states that Christ is called Wisdom in scripture, and the Father and the Holy Spirit are also called wisdom, but not three wisdoms, but one wisdom. Thus, they each have the attribute, but there is only one attribute.

This brings us to book eight where Augustine tells us that we must love the Trinity. Now, we ask ourselves how can you love something that you do not know? Augustine tells us that we love Jesus Christ, and we believe in the resurrection, ascension, incarnation and passion and in Jesus Christ, but we didn't know Him. But, we do know what it is to die and to live. Thus, we know Jesus, and He is God and God is the Trinity. Therefore, we can love the Trinity.

Augustine tries to explain the Trinity by discussing other possible trinities. There is a kind of trinity that exist in man consisting of the mind, knowledge and love. Another trinity is the one that consist of memory, understanding and will. Then, there is the Trinity of the outer man which consist of the visible object, the act of seeing and the attention of the mind. I realize that the last trinity mentioned is a dangerous and immoral one.







When I read books 13 and 14, I realized that if you know thyself then you have it made. If you know thyself, then you know God. The Word has treasures of both wisdom and knowledge. We receive grace from this knowledge and truth from this wisdom. Therefore, if we know God and we do his will. Then, we are filled with his grace.

Thus, I agree with Augustine that Christ gives us faith concerning temporal things and truth concerning eternal things. Through Christ, we are given knowledge and wisdom to do His will, but faith is necessary.

Augustine concludes his treatise by admitting that this Trinity is seen by us as a mystery and an enigma. It is a mirror, as it is seen by means of the image of God which we are. It is as in a likeness that is obscure and hard to comprehend.

I feel that we have to take the Trinity by faith, and by having faith we will be given wisdom and grace by the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit that we will be able to understand it. This will only happen if we reinforce this faith by reading the scriptures so we will seek wisdom and truth.

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